

Docket No.: YOR920000753US1

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AUG 07 2006

The present application was filed on February 16, 2001 with claims 1-28, of which claims 1, 15, 19, 24, 27, and 28 are independent claims. Claims 9 and 23 were previously cancelled. In the Amendment and Response to Office Action dated August 5, 2004, claims 29 and 30 were added. Claims 1-8, 10-22, and 24-30 are currently pending in the above-identified patent application. Claims 2, 15-18, 24-26, 28 and 30 are proposed to be cancelled herein, without prejudice.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner objected to claim 30 and rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing 10 to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that applicant regards as the invention. In addition, claims 1-7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Mault et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2001/0049470). The Examiner also rejected claims 3-6 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mault in view of Yahagi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,984,274). Claim 12 15 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mault in view of Kmack et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,304,851). Claims 14, 15, 17-19, 22, 24, 26, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mault in view of well known prior art. Claim 16 was rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mault in view of well known prior art and further in view of Kmack. Claim 20 was rejected 20 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mault in view of well known prior art and further in view of Yahagi. Claims 21 and 25 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mault in view of well known prior art and further in view of Tran (U.S. Patent No. 5,991,742). Claim 2 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

25 Applicants have addressed the formal objection to claim 30 and rejection of claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

The Examiner has indicated that Claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have amended independent claim 1 (as well as corresponding independent claims 19 and 27) to include all of the limitations of claim 2. 30 Thus, Applicants submit that independent claims 1, 19 and 27 are allowable. In addition, dependent claims 3, 4-8, 10-14, 20-22, and 29 depend on claims 1, 19 or 27 and are

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therefore also believed to be allowable, because of their dependency from independent claims 1, 19 and 27 for the reasons set forth above, as well as other elements these claims add in combination to their base claim.

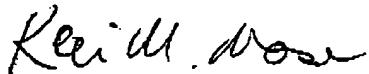
All of the pending claims, i.e., claims 1, 3-8, 10-14, 19-22, 27, and 29, are
5 in condition for allowance and such favorable action is earnestly solicited.

If any outstanding issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

The Examiner's attention to this matter is appreciated.

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Respectfully submitted,



Date: August 7, 2006

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